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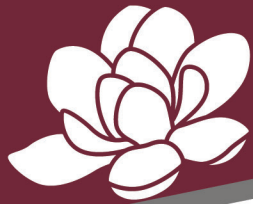
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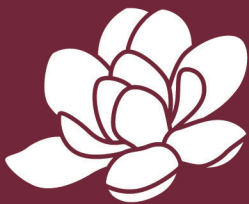
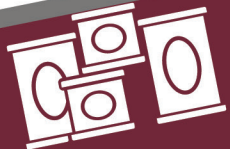
MAROON TRADITIONS

STUDENT AFFAIRS MAGAZINE

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

2023-2024

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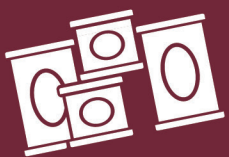
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TAKING CARE
OF WHAT MATTERS



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FRIENDS

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STUDENT EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

2023-24

KATE DICKERSON

Colvard Student Union
Major: Accounting



The 2023-24 Outstanding Student Employee of the Year for the Mississippi State University Division of Student Affairs was Kate Dickerson, a junior accounting major who works with our Colvard Student Union team.

When asked about Dickerson, Raymond Brooks, her supervisor and the executive director of the Colvard Student Union and MSU Event Services, said:

“Kate has a welcoming personality that is a perfect fit for the office. She steps up anytime she is needed and is a great help in finding better ways to complete assignments. Kate is an asset to the office. She assists guests with a welcoming attitude and helps them leave the office on a pleasant note.”

We are grateful for the work Dickerson and students like her do to give back to MSU and the division!

Nominator:
Raymond Brooks,
Executive Director,
Colvard Student Union

SPIRIT OF STATE

Mississippi State University students are driven by a desire to learn, lead, explore and serve. The hearts and actions of these students embodies the Spirit of State.

MSU faculty, staff and students annually nominate students — from all classifications, backgrounds and majors — who personify the Spirit of State. What makes Spirit of State unique is that the only criterion for the honor is a demonstration of exemplary university values both in and out of the classroom.

Twenty-nine students — out of a record 128 nominees — were selected to receive the honor for the 2023-24 academic year. The 19th class of recipients hailed from 24 majors and represented Mississippi,

Alabama, Florida, Maryland, Tennessee and Russia.

MSU's Division of Student Affairs honored Spirit of State recipients with a ceremony in Old Main Academic Center that included friends and family. Lauryn Polito, a 2023 recipient, and Roderick Davis, a 2015 recipient, welcomed attendees and recognized past recipients in attendance. Selection committee members Robert Banik and Santee Ezell presented the awards with assistance from MSU President Mark E. Keenum and Vice President for Student Affairs Regina Young Hyatt.

The Spirit of State encapsulates the essence of MSU and serves as a way to recognize students committed to taking care of what matters.



2023-24 RECIPIENTS

Karime Alonso Ixtepan
Civil Engineering

Mason Blair
Architecture

Joshua Britt
Information Technology Services

Hayden Cherry
Agricultural Education, Leadership, and Communications

Madeleine Conerly
Biochemistry

Hannah Crowe
Biochemistry

Carrington Davis
Elementary Education

Maggie Everett
Biochemistry

Michael Farmer
Biochemistry

William Grisham
Biological Sciences and Poultry Science

Ellie Herndon
Supply Chain Logistics and Management

Madelyn Hunter
Biochemistry

Jeffery Johnson
Finance

Caroline Kercheval
Microbiology

Laura Grace King
Educational Psychology

Matteo Mauro
Communication

Grace May
Human Development and Family Science

Cameron Mayers
Political Science and Communication

Emily McFatter
Food Science, Nutrition and Health Promotion

Keimauri McKenzie
Business Information Systems

Aiden McLain
Business Administration

Judith Meeks
Industrial Engineering

Nathan Mosley
Biomedical Engineering

Alina Nigmatullina
Higher Educational Leadership

Emma Palmer
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

Emma Schultz
Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture

Olivia Springfield
Elementary Education

Kasia Williams
Biological Sciences

Alyssa Williams
Biochemistry and Psychology

WWII MEMORIAL

BY ISAAC CIVILS

In October 2023, Mississippi State University's G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery Center for America's Veterans unveiled a World War II memorial to honor and bring awareness to the many that fought during the war.

The WWII memorial sits proudly outside the center's Nusz Hall home and represents the honor, sacrifice and dedication to the U.S. that these brave soldiers exhibited. It also reminds students of the service, honor and contributions of those who defended freedom during WWII.



At the unveiling ceremony, MSU President Mark E. Keenum and Vice President for Strategic Communications Sid Salter shared personal stories of family members who served in the war. Keenum spoke of the unimaginable pain parents endured sending their children off to war, many of whom never returned.

He reflected on his great uncle Alvin Jeffords, who was killed in action and awarded the Purple Heart.



Salter shared his father's story. Leo Salter survived D-Day at the Battle of Normandy, and his experiences are a testament to the strength and endurance of the men who fought on the front lines.

Andrew Rendon, executive director of veteran and military affairs at MSU, emphasized that the monument symbolizes the university's dedication to honoring those who served, died or are still actively serving.

"(The memorial) is basically a symbol of our dedication, support and honor to those men and women who fought in World War II," Rendon said. "It is important that we should never forget about those who have served, who have died serving and who are actively serving."

Rendon and his team at the G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery

Center for America's Veterans work to ensure that military-connected students have the resources they need to succeed. He believes the memorial can serve as a powerful reminder to students that many soldiers who fought in WWII were close to their age when they left home to fight.

"It is a living, breathing, dynamic, symbolic thing that shows the importance of being a young man or woman on campus, to prioritize learning and get an education, and the importance of service to country," Rendon added.



This memorial is another way MSU — named a top 10 Military Friendly School by VIQTOYRY for the fourth straight year — demonstrates its ongoing commitment to supporting America's veterans.

FIND YOUR PEOPLE

“You got to find your people, the ones that make you feel alright ...” Those are the lyrics sung by Drew Holcomb and The Neighbors in their song “Find Your People.”

Mississippi State University launched a Find Your People campaign in fall 2023 to help students find a sense of belonging on campus.

Spearheaded by the Center for Student Activities, or CSA, the campaign encourages students to build relationships during their time on campus through student organizations, shared academic interests or engaging in campus life.

“We want them to have a sense of belonging and feel like they’re connected in some way to this campus,” Kylie Forrester, CSA director, said.



Find Your People is integrated into events throughout the academic year and can be found using the Find Your People tag on Cowbell Connect.

One of the initial Find Your People events was last fall’s The Longest Table. Held for the first time during homecoming on Perry Plaza, this event was part of a nationwide movement aimed at fostering connection among attendees.



Attendees were assigned to tables based on the color of the wristband they received and encouraged to engage in conversations with fellow students they did not know, breaking down social barriers.

By partnering with other organizations and hosting events like Winter Welcome Back, the campaign ensures students are given multiple opportunities to engage and feel connected.

CSA encourages students

to share the connections they’ve made through photo opportunities and social media — a testimony to the campaign’s impact on helping students integrate into the MSU community.



“It goes back to that sense of belonging,” Forrester said. “We know that it helps with retention rates and persistence through graduation.”

By encouraging students to connect with a group or organization, Find Your People hopes to create lasting bonds that make students’ Bulldog journeys more enjoyable.

CSA hopes that the Find Your People campaign will continue helping students find a supportive, inclusive community environment on campus that fits their interests and needs, ensuring they leave MSU not only with a degree but also with lifelong connections.

HEALTHY INITIATIVES

BY ALICE ANN HAAB

OFFICE FOR STUDENT WELL-BEING

Student well-being is more than being physically healthy — it is a lifestyle. This is what the Office for Student Well-Being strives and continues to do for Mississippi State University students.

Last year, the office began the process of rebranding from Health Promotion and Wellness to the Office for Student Well-Being, a move designed to help accentuate the importance of healthy decisions for students inside and outside the classroom.

The rebrand, which aims to support students' health and well-being, ties in with MSU's new slogan, "Taking Care of What Matters."

HEALTH EDUCATION AND WELLNESS

Focusing on the eight dimensions of wellness, the Office for Student Well-Being provides various programs, including recovery programs, mental health awareness, nutritional counseling and prevention education.

With students at the heart of its mission, the Office for Student Well-Being utilizes a team of students and graduate assistants and student organizations, such as Active Minds, Aspiring Minorities in Health Care and Healthy Dawgs. These initiatives provide students with opportunities to network, gain professional experience and grow their healthcare knowledge.

BULLDOGS IN RECOVERY

Within the Office for Student Well-Being, the Collegiate Recovery Community also rebranded to Bulldogs in Recovery and celebrated its 10th year supporting students in recovery from alcohol, drugs and all process addictions.

The Bulldogs in Recovery rebrand has allowed the program to grow and become more familiar to students and faculty. Not only does it provide recovery and meditation meetings, but it also offers various events for students in recovery, allies, friends and family members. These may be socials, retreats or a

full week of Collegiate Recovery Week activities.

Integrating into campus events, like football games, can be challenging for students in recovery. Bulldogs in Recovery provides opportunities like sober tailgates so those students can socialize and feel comfortable in a difficult environment.

Students interested in becoming involved can attend Monday night seminars, Recovery Nights on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month or visit the Bulldogs in Recover website at recovery.msstate.edu.

ONE PILL CAN KILL

The Office for Student Well-Being raises awareness of the dangers of fentanyl use and provides Narcan, also known as Naloxone, to reverse opioid overdose and fentanyl test strips. Last February, those efforts received a boost thanks to MSU joining Mississippi Attorney General Lynn Fitch's One Pill Can Kill initiative.

"As one of our largest universities, Mississippi State's involvement in One Pill Can Kill is crucial to combatting

the fentanyl crisis,” said Fitch during the ceremony announcing the partnership. “By raising awareness of the dangers of fentanyl and equipping students with the knowledge and tools to stop an overdose, I am confident lives will be saved. I am grateful for all our partners who are working together to end this deadly epidemic.”

MSU is one of six universities in the state to join the initiative. As part of the partnership, MSU received 1,000 Fentanyl Harm Prevention Kits — which include two fentanyl test strips, a pair of gloves for safety, a safe drug disposal bag and a pill identification card that identifies whether the drug is legitimate — for students

and training on how to use the fentanyl test strips.

The initiative will continue to provide training for student organizations and others across campus, providing the next step in empowering students to go beyond being bystanders.



OFFICE OF SURVIVOR SUPPORT

The Office of Survivor Support, or OSS, advocates for students in a variety of ways, specifically for students who have experienced harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, dating or domestic violence, and other crimes.

While advocacy is essential, OSS strives to advocate and educate for the safety of MSU students through

events on campus.

OSS collaborated with partners, such as the MSU Police Department, Student Counseling Services, the Disability Resource Center and Safe Haven, a local domestic violence shelter, to raise awareness during April's Sexual Assault Awareness Month. The office utilized the Student Affairs Marketing and Communication team

to create promotional materials for the events.

Events included Shining a Light on Sexual Assault, Bagels and Badges, Walking on Sunshine, Cup of Prevention and an open house at the office's new College View location. These events allowed students to become more familiar with OSS, its campus partners and the resources they offer.

ARMY & AIR FORCE ROTC JOIN STUDENT AFFAIRS

Mississippi State University's Army and Air Force ROTC programs have a new home under the Division of Student Affairs, a move that aims to enhance support for cadets and strengthen the university's military-friendly initiatives.

Associate Vice President for Student Affairs Jeremy Baham said moving the ROTC programs under the division came through recognition of the role they play in the holistic development of the cadets they serve.

"(ROTC's) mission is to develop strong leaders that go on to serve their country in the Army, Air Force, Reserves and National Guard," Baham said. "This mission of student development fits seamlessly with the mission of Student Affairs at Mississippi State."



The move will better align the ROTC units with MSU's G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery Center for America's Veterans, streamlining support for military-connected students and fostering deeper departmental collaboration.

Andrew Rendon, executive director of veteran and military affairs, emphasized the natural fit between ROTC and the center's mission to advocate for and support military-connected students.



"While the support was there before the move, it allows us to increase awareness of our programs while strengthening the relationship between the departments," Rendon said.

The transition further aligns with the Division of Student Affairs' strategic plan, which focuses on student learning and professional development.

As part of the division, ROTC staff participate in professional development initiatives and support student learning events like the Student Experience Expo, which the division hosted in the spring.



The integration of the ROTC units into the Division of Student Affairs represents MSU's commitment to preparing cadets for future leadership while continuing to honor the university's deep-rooted military tradition.

"The new relationship between both the Air Force and Army ROTC programs and the Division of Student Affairs offers opportunities for cadets and the cadre to safely grow and develop," Rendon said.

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

CENTER FOR AMERICA'S VETERANS

The G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery Center for America's Veterans engages military-connected students through educational benefits, transitional support and activities to promote learning, well-being and success. Scholarships provided by alumni and friends of MSU assist these students with any unmet financial needs while attending school.



STUDENT AFFAIRS GENERAL FUND

The Division of Student Affairs' central focus is student success and engagement. By donating to the division's general fund, you are contributing to the programs and services offered by our departments, which are here to help our students achieve academic success, personal growth and career goals.

BULLDOGS IN RECOVERY

Bulldogs in Recovery is a comprehensive support program on campus that aids students in recovery from drugs and alcohol in order to achieve academic success. Additionally, Bulldogs in Recovery educates recovering students, Mississippi State University as a whole and the community at large about the disease of addiction and effective methods for recovery.



BULLY'S PANTRY

Bully's Pantry assists in meeting the basic needs of students who are experiencing food insecurity and other financial needs. Opened in 2020, Bully's Pantry has assisted hundreds of MSU students by providing nutritious food and basic personal necessities.

MARLOW TREE

When running their frequent training route on campus, Mississippi State University Army ROTC cadets will pass by a tree dedicated in memory of former Bulldog Battalion cadet Colby L. Marlow, a Carrollton, native who left a lasting impact on the MSU community.

Marlow tragically passed away in a car accident in 2021 during his senior year. The tree, planted along George Perry Street, serves as a living reminder of Marlow's influence, values, service to his community and love of MSU.

"My family and I are extremely grateful that Mississippi State University allowed this tree to be planted in Colby's memory," Colby's twin brother, Cade Marlow, said. "Colby loved his time at MSU and spent some of his best days at this university. This tree will help

Colby's memory live on for many years to come."

The ceremony highlighted Colby's dedication not only to the military but also to his friendships, academics and MSU — especially Bulldog athletics.

"When students and visitors pass this tree, I want them to remember that Colby was a friend of everyone. He had a genuine and kind heart. He truly wanted the best for people," Cade said. "He was also a devoted fan of all MSU sports."

Colby was actively serving in the Mississippi Army National Guard and a committed member of the Bulldog Battalion at the time of his passing. His deep sense of patriotism and service was a defining part of his character.

During the ceremony, Nick Murphy, an MSU Army ROTC cadet from Winona, reflected on the lasting influence of his friendship with Colby.

"Let its roots symbolize the depth of our connection to him; its branches, the reach of his influence; and its leaves, the memories that we will forever cherish in our hearts," Murphy, whose own path to the military was shaped by Colby's encouragement, said.

Jason Posey, former professor of military science and Bulldog Battalion commander, honored Marlow's model of leadership and service during the ceremony.

"His journey was defined by exceptional achievements and unwavering commitment to service," Posey said. "His dedication to excellence and his commitment to country and community inspired all who had the privilege of knowing him."

Marlow's legacy also continues through the Cadet Colby Marlow Scholarship, which supports MSU Army ROTC cadets, ensuring his spirit of service and leadership will inspire future students.

For more information about the Cadet Colby Marlow Scholarship, visit armyrotc.msstate.edu/scholarships/cadet-colby-marlow.



MSU WELCOMES ERIN ANDREWS

Erin Andrews has spoken to audiences on television from the sidelines of football stadiums and the ballroom of Dancing with the Stars.



Last spring, the Mississippi State University Student Association brought the trailblazing sports broadcaster and journalist to campus as part of the university's Women's History Month celebrations and Global Lecture Series — which has included speakers such as astronaut Buzz Aldrin, television personality Bill Nye the Science Guy, award-winning journalist Lisa Ling and former CBS Evening News anchor Dan Rather.

Known for her work as a sideline reporter for the NFL on Fox and her time as a co-host on Dancing with the

Stars, Andrews shared her journey and how she balances a successful career with family life.

Ellie Herndon, MSU's 2023-24 Student Association president, said Andrews' visit was impactful. She shared about breaking barriers in the sports broadcasting world and the importance of mental health and wellness, a topic that resonates deeply with students.

In addition to that main session, Andrews held two smaller, more intimate meet-and-greet sessions — one primarily attended by student leaders and another for student-athletes.

Attendees appreciated the opportunity to interact with Andrews on a more personal level.



“It was really inspiring to hear about her journey of working her way up to where she is now as a woman in a male-dominant field,” Herndon said. “It was insightful to hear her discuss some of the challenges as a woman in her industry and her journey of becoming a mom on top of her many other accomplishments.”

Herndon had the opportunity to present Andrews with a cowbell, which she proudly raised in the air and rang.

“Starkville is not an unfamiliar place to her,” Herndon said. “When I gave her that cowbell, she knew exactly what to do with it. It was amazing to see her embrace a tradition we hold so dear here at MSU.”

Andrews' visit to MSU not only celebrated her career, but it also served as an inspiration to the students who attended.

STUDENT LEADER



BRANNAN TISDALE

Active involvement in campus student organizations has been a staple of Brannan Tisdale's time at Mississippi State University.

The senior's campus involvement began in his freshman year when he was appointed to the Student Association Senate. He later joined the SA Cabinet, and, last year, he was appointed to Executive Council as director of policy.

Currently, Tisdale, a geological and earth sciences major, works in the Shackouls Honors College and writes for The Reflector, MSU's student newspaper. These communities allow him to engage with other curious learners and like-minded people. He can also use his writing as an outlet to express his passion for the university and the student body.

Tisdale, a Saraland, Alabama, native, sees his involvement in student organizations as an opportunity to make a difference on campus alongside some of the best and brightest minds, an idea that excites him.

"As a minority out-of-state student, I take pride in holding unique perspectives and defending those and the organizations I am, and have been, part of," Tisdale said. "I hope to use my platform to shed light on some of the lesser-known or less glamorous parts of campus to demonstrate what it really means to be a Bulldog."



KELAN TRAYLOR

When Kelan Traylor transferred to Mississippi State University from community college, he wanted to find ways to help students.

The Tupelo native and communication major found a familiar way to get involved as an orientation leader, or OL, a position he held while at Itawamba Community College.

Being an OL offered Traylor a solid foundation at MSU that led to him exploring other involvement avenues, including Maroon VIP, where he is vice president after serving as director of membership.

He is also part of New Maroon Camp, MSU's student-led retreat that prepares first-year students for the transition to MSU, and S.P.A.R.K., a program that introduces underrepresented rising seniors to opportunities after high school.

"New Maroon Camp and S.P.A.R.K staff are some of the first people incoming students really get to know," Traylor said. "Getting the incoming freshmen acquainted with campus or serving as a mentor for them during the year, I want to help them however I can."

SPOTLIGHTS

BY GRAYCEN VAIL &
BRAXTON STONE

Andrew Powell has always been drawn to service, influenced by a family background in the military, law enforcement and emergency services.

Powell joined the Mississippi State University Army ROTC, where the Cadet Sergeant Major from Gulfport has discovered new avenues of growth and leadership.

This summer, Powell participated in Project Global Officer, or Project GO, a nationwide program offering ROTC students overseas language and cultural immersion opportunities.

Powell went to Latvia, where

he immersed himself in Russian language courses and political science internships. He also interacted with NATO officials and government leaders while traveling through Estonia and Lithuania.

Powell earned six foreign language and three political science credits through Project GO, furthering his academic and military career goals.

“Foreign languages, especially strategic ones like Russian, open a lot of doors,” Powell said.

Learning from different cultures and broadening his understanding of geopolitics was valuable for Powell, and



ANDREW POWELL

he encourages fellow cadets to consider opportunities like Project GO to enhance both their language skills and global awareness.

As Student Association president for 2024-25, Carson McFatridge is focused on three points: outreach, accountability and inclusion. The Searcy, Arkansas, native brings a unique perspective to the role as the first out-of-state Student Association, or SA, president.

McFatridge's SA involvement began her freshman year with Freshman Reach, a program where freshmen get involved with the SA through a curriculum based on freshman success, leadership development and productivity.

She joined the SA Cabinet as a sophomore and later served as

secretary before being elected president in spring 2024.

“I do want students to come to me and feel like they have someone who is their advocate and their friend,” McFatridge said. “One of my biggest pieces of philosophy is, it's one thing to be in charge; it's one thing to be a leader. Being a leader means that I'm willing to listen, but I can't listen if I'm not having those conversations.”

Beyond the SA, the wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture major is actively involved in the College of Forest Resources as an ambassador,



CARSON MCFATRIDGE

a member of the Dean's Council of Student Leaders and a participant in Mississippi State's Ducks Unlimited chapter.

WARNOCK FAMILY PANTRY GIFT

BY GRAYCEN VAIL

A committed planned gift to Mississippi State University from Aldie and Candice Warnock will establish the Warnock Family Forest that will support educational research while also addressing food insecurity on campus.



Warnock Family Forest will be located within the Bulldog Forest, encompassing nearly 200 acres of forest land in Oktibbeha County's Tibbee Bottom.

For Aldie, a Vicksburg native and 1981 MSU graduate, the gift serves as an expression of his appreciation to MSU and also honors the values instilled in him by his parents, who taught him the importance of community and generosity.

His commitment to philanthropy is deeply rooted in his faith and his desire to support students in need.

A long-time advocate for environmental conservation, Aldie sees the establishment of the Warnock Family Forest as a way to enhance the university's academic mission and contribute to the broader understanding of environmental stewardship.

The Warnocks' commitment to helping others extends beyond academics. Over the years, they have opened their land to address food insecurity, allowing people to hunt for food on their property and donating hundreds of pounds of meat to those in need.

Their dedication to fighting food insecurity on campus will benefit Bully's Pantry — a collaborative effort between MSU's Division of Student Affairs and the Student Association that provides food, toiletries and other necessities to meet students' basic needs — through the creation of an endowed fund through the forest's annual proceeds.

Bully's Pantry is located at 120 Morgan Avenue on campus, and a vending machine

was recently added in the Colvard Student Union to provide essentials to students on-the-go.

By contributing to Bully's Pantry, their generous gift will help reduce the burden many students face, allowing them to focus on their studies.

The Warnocks' generosity reflects their strong connection to MSU and their desire to make a lasting impact. Their gift ensures that future generations of Bulldogs will benefit from the resources and opportunities the Warnock Family Forest provides, all while strengthening the university's commitment to student success and community support.



TEXTING SERVICE

Mobile phones are part of students' daily lives, with text messaging and social media dominating communication. Recognizing this trend, Mississippi State University launched a text messaging service to enhance its efforts of providing timely resources and information to students.

The Division of Student Affairs started using this method — which conveniently and efficiently delivers important updates directly to students' mobile devices — in spring 2024.

“Social media algorithms can limit the visibility of our resources,” explained Brock Turnipseed, the Division of Student Affairs' director of marketing and communication. “Text messaging ensures students can receive critical information promptly and reliably.”

MSU partnered with Mongoose, a leading provider of text messaging and chat platforms for higher education institutions. To ensure responsible use, the university established guidelines for sending messages, focusing on essential topics like student activities, health and well-being resources, and urgent announcements.

The service complements existing communication channels like email and social media, providing an additional avenue for reaching students.

Students can opt into the service through their Banner account and select the areas of interest in which they wish to receive updates.

Student Affairs is one of several areas using the service. To prevent overwhelming students with messages, teams create communication

plans for each semester that outline the content and frequency of messages to be sent.

Mongoose's platform empowers users to create targeted segments based on student data such as housing assignment, meal plan, campus location and first-generation status. This feature enables MSU to send relevant information to specific groups of students.

One of Mongoose's advantages is its ability to automate certain tasks, such as sending scheduled messages or providing automated responses. However, MSU also maintains a human touch by having a dedicated Mongoose representative available for support and guidance.

After launching the text messaging service in spring 2024, Student Affairs has reached over 11,200 students with valuable resources, such as student organization involvement, food insecurity and mental health support.

Turnipseed expressed optimism about the service's potential to enhance student engagement and success. He emphasized the importance of continued growth and encouraged more students to opt in to receive valuable updates and resources.



SANDERSON RENOVATIONS

BY BRALYNN NEWELL



The Sanderson Center at Mississippi State University received a new facelift this summer, unveiling a newly renovated and expanded facility for students when they returned in the fall.

The renovation adds more workout areas and amenities to better serve a student population that has nearly doubled since the facility originally opened in 1998.

For 26 years, the facility has been the heart of recreation at MSU, offering amenities such as weight rooms, personal training, sports courts, a climbing wall and a swimming pool. These services extend beyond the university, welcoming the greater Oktibbeha County community.

Patrik Nordin, the University Recreation director, was a senior on campus when the Sanderson Center first opened. He described feeling a “wow!” factor when he first entered the then-modern and state-of-the-art building. Nordin hopes students have that same feeling when they see the updated facility.

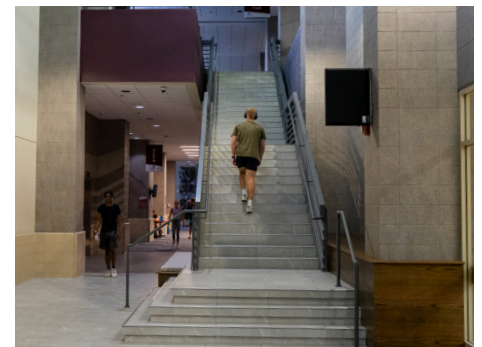
“I’m hoping the students who come in and see these spaces have the same reaction that I had when I first walked into this facility and that it will inspire people to engage in working out on a regular basis,” Nordin said.

The two-phase, \$2.5 million project marked the first major renovations of the Sanderson Center since it opened in 1998. Though the building is 150,000 square feet, more students combined with the center serving MSU faculty and staff and the Oktibbeha County community meant a greater demand for equipment and space.

Overcrowding had been a student concern for many years in focus groups and surveys, and this sparked action from the university’s recreation department.

“Around 2021, there were students voicing their frustration about the overcrowding of the Sanderson Center. They had also seen some recreation centers at other schools, and they brought their concerns to my attention,” he said. “They met with the Student Association president, who felt like this was a worthy cause.”

The input from the MSU student body led the Student Association in 2022 to facilitate a referendum to raise the student activity fee to help fund the renovation project along with additional university funds.



Meetings about the Sanderson Center’s future began in the fall of 2022. Architecture firms were tasked with envisioning and crafting a renovated Sanderson Center that they could see themselves using as students.

The chosen firm, Wier Boerner Allin Architecture, had a number of Mississippi

State graduates on the team, adding a special touch to the renovation plans.



“It’s cool that we’ve kind of come full circle here,” Nordin said. “We have Mississippi State graduates who are designing a space for future students.”

Decisions had to be made about what changes were important in shaping the facility for future Bulldogs. These changes included a second weight room, a bouldering cave and additional fitness equipment and space.

The two-phase renovation began by closing the second floor to convert existing racquetball courts into a new exercise area.



The first-floor racquetball courts were also closed to provide more Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility and convert the corner court into a bouldering cave that would

let members practice climbing maneuvers without having to use ropes and harnesses.

Phase two followed with closure of the facility’s main corridor to construct a new stairway that will provide greater access to the second-floor walking track and workout areas. The second phase also included added new lockers and seating and filling in the second-floor opening over the first floor to provide additional upper-level workout space.

Nordin believes these renovations will add to the overall campus experience of the students who visit the new and improved building.



“We want students to have the best experience they can have here. If they come for the first time and it’s overcrowded and they can’t find any equipment because it’s all being used, they’ll probably turn around, go home and not come back,” Nordin said.

“We’re trying to make sure that everyone who walks through the door feels welcome and has the space that they need to do the

workout that they want to do.”

The second-floor renovations excited Nordin the most, as the designs he worked on in his spare time were finally coming to life.



“I’ve done photoshopping of what that upstairs space could be for several years before this whole project even started,” Nordin said. “That space is really special, and I want to see how students react to that space.”

After more than two years of planning, the ideas and designs for the Sanderson Center moved from the page and became a reality. While the new renovations have been a hit with students, the ever-changing nature of recreation already has Nordin and his University Recreation team looking forward to the next round of projects that can evolve the services the department offers to students and the community.

The Sanderson Center plays an important role in shaping the health and well-being of the MSU and Oktibbeha County communities, and Nordin hopes the new and improved center will help them find a place to work out comfortably.

MSU PD K-9S

BY JULIE WEEDEN

The Mississippi State University Police Department has unleashed the dogs to help keep the campus safe.

Established in 2014, this specialized K-9 unit within the patrol division is one of the many ways the department works to protect students, faculty, staff and visitors.



The K-9 unit consists of four highly trained canines, who, alongside their handlers, provide an extra layer of security across the MSU campus and surrounding community. These dedicated dogs are trained at American Working Dogs in Sherwood, Arkansas, where they complete a minimum of 80 hours of initial training before officially joining the force. After that, they continue their development with at least 16 hours of monthly maintenance

training to ensure their skills remain sharp.

Each canine lives with its handler full-time to strengthen the bond between officer and dog, ensuring they work effectively as a team. The current K-9 teams include Miguel and Sgt. Patrick Jenkins, Bessie and Sgt. Nick Coe, Koda and Sgt. Corey Stange, and the newest addition, Bash and Officer Bradley Frost.

Bash joined the department in 2024, replacing Bach, who retired after 10 years of service. Bach was honored with an on-campus retirement reception, and his handler officially adopted him, allowing the loyal dog to enjoy his retirement at home.

In a fun and engaging initiative, MSU conducted a campus-wide poll to allow students to choose the name of the newest K-9 officer. Students selected Bash, a name inspired by Bulldog Bash, the university's popular annual free outdoor concert held in downtown Starkville each fall.

Bash was officially sworn in and began his duties protecting the MSU community in the spring of 2024. Alongside his fellow canines, Bash helps ensure safety by participating in various patrol and detection activities.

The department's K-9 unit includes three explosive detector teams and one narcotics detection team. The explosive detector teams are specially trained to perform bomb sweeps before large events, particularly MSU athletics, graduations and concerts. The teams are also used to check for suspicious packages and vehicles and respond to any bomb threat location at MSU.

In addition to serving MSU, the K-9 teams can assist law enforcement and safety departments in Starkville.

Having a K-9 unit based on campus allows the department to respond quickly to incidents. The central location also enables the canines and their handlers to regularly patrol the area, offering a visible and reassuring presence. Students often enjoy interacting with the dogs, stopping to pet and play with them between classes.

The K-9 unit is an integral part of the department's mission to foster a safe environment while positively contributing to student development and healthy lifestyles. With the help of its four-legged officers, the MSU Police Department is committed to providing top-tier law enforcement services to the university and the wider Starkville community.

New to MSU



The Division of Student Affairs collaborates with campus partners to highlight what is “New to MSU.”

Humphrey Coliseum renovations provided new experiences for students supporting the men’s and women’s basketball programs.

Students enjoying the YMCA Plaza can be the DJ using Rockbot. Used in businesses like Walmart and Planet Fitness, Rockbot also allows the division to run audio announcements about on-campus resources.



A sensory room — a therapeutic space intended to help students regulate their responses to sensory stimuli — opened on the third floor of Mitchell Memorial Library thanks to a request from the MSU Student Association and the Libraries Accessibility Committee.



The College View Connector, a 1-mile multi-use path linking campus to Highway 182, opened last fall.

The Center for Student Activities launched Hail State Holidays. Part of the festivities included lighting a new 24-foot tree and a 12-foot menorah outside the Colvard Student Union.

MSU STUDENTS SAVE A LIFE

Imagine spending a regular day at Mississippi State or hanging out with friends when a voice comes across the radio calling for units to respond to an unresponsive individual.

This was the situation last January when Jack Edwards, Sam Boin and Kylie Labelle, MSU students and volunteer firefighters at the East Oktibbeha Volunteer Fire Station, answered a call that would test their training and ultimately result in saving a life.

They received the Oktibbea County Fire Service Citizen Life-Saving Award for their heroic act, but they want the recognition to encourage MSU students to consider serving as volunteer firefighters.

A COMMITMENT TO SERVICE

A senior business administration major from Nashville, Tennessee, Edwards went with a friend to one of the monthly meetings and was “hooked.” Now in his fourth year, he balances volunteering with his coursework and his role as president of Kappa Alpha fraternity.

“I have about 110 guys in the fraternity to look after, and then I try to respond to as many fire calls as possible,” Edwards said. “It’s helped me manage my time better, and it’s given me a unique perspective on life and what really matters.”

Boin has volunteered for over a year here and back home in

Havre de Grace, Maryland. His training also benefits his role as a resident advisor (RA), a position that acts as a community builder, crisis manager, counselor, educator and leader for MSU’s residence halls.

“I have always been interested in volunteering as a way to give back, stay fit and build relationships with like-minded people,” Boin said. “Balancing school, work and my (RA) responsibilities with the fire department can be tough, but good time management and hard work go a long way.”

Labelle, a Meridian native who graduated with a degree in wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture, washed firetrucks at the station during Student Leadership and Community Engagement’s Service Dawgs Day in 2022. Through that, she discovered how being a volunteer firefighter could aid her interest in wildland firefighting.

“Structural and wildland firefighting have a lot of overlapping skills and responsibilities,” Labelle said. “I spoke to the firefighters about what they do, and I was compelled to join. I have always had a passion for serving others, so it just felt right.”



A LIFE-SAVING NIGHT

On that January night, they responded to a 9-1-1 alert for an unresponsive male patient. Every second was critical.

Boin was first on-site. It was his first cardiac arrest patient, but he knew starting chest compressions was crucial.

Edwards and Labelle took over compressions when they arrived, and Boin managed the patient's airway until the patient was stable enough for transport to the hospital.

"We've worked together so many times that we know how each other operates," Labelle said.

BALANCING SCHOOL, SERVICE

Balancing being a student and a volunteer firefighter is no easy feat. Calls come in throughout the day, but these students have learned to manage their time effectively.

"Our fire chief (Greg Ball) reminds us that school comes first," Labelle said. "I let my professors know that I'm a firefighter, and they usually work with me if I need to leave class for an emergency."

Edwards credits the ability to juggle multiple responsibilities to what he's learned as a firefighter.

"You have to be able to think on your feet, especially in stressful situations," he said. "It has taught me how to manage stress and make decisions quickly."

For Boin, the experience has made him more resilient as an RA.

"The more you're forced to perform under stressful circumstances, the easier it becomes," he said. "Whether it's handling a tough situation in the (residence halls) or dealing with an emergency on a fire call, the experience as a firefighter helps in every aspect of life."



THE IMPACT OF VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTING

The skills and lasting bonds that have developed from being a volunteer firefighter have been life-changing for the three.

"I'll probably be a volunteer firefighter for the rest of my life," Edwards said. "It's a different kind of experience. You realize how important it is to give back."

Labelle agreed, saying volunteering had changed her perspective on life.

"The fire department is a family, and we take care of each other and our community," she said. "It challenges me to be the best person I can be, and it's left me with lifelong friends."

Boin said the commitment is challenging but rewarding.

"You're making a real difference in people's lives, and there's no better feeling than knowing you helped save someone," he said.

The three students are a testament to the power of service and the strength of the Bulldog spirit in the face of adversity.

DINING RENOVATIONS

BY BRAXTON STONE

A significant transformation to the dining services offered at Mississippi State is underway. The new dining options and renovations aim to enhance the dining experience, ensuring it meets the diverse needs and preferences of the student body.



NEW CAMPUS DINING ADDITIONS

Subway and Bento Sushi debuted this fall in the former University Florist location. Subway provides the familiar comfort of customizable sandwiches, while Bento Sushi introduces a fresh option with a menu featuring sushi and a selection of Asian noodles.

To meet the needs of students with food allergies, MSU also introduced a True Balance station in the Fresh Food Company dining hall that offers a complete menu that excludes the eight most common allergens.

Starkville-based Umble Coffee Co. opened in the Barnes & Noble Café, providing a cozy spot for students to recharge with a caffeine boost.

A LOOK AHEAD

Along with these exciting new options, the 2024-25 school year will usher in a renovation to Perry Cafeteria, which will breathe new life into the Mississippi landmark that dates back to 1921.

It will reopen as Perry Food Hall in fall 2025, offering students a food hall concept seen in many metropolitan areas with a southern-style kitchen, a grill and barbeque option, and a station for salads and vegetarian concepts.

Starbucks will relocate from the Colvard Student Union to the Perry Food Hall, and students can use the seating spaces in Perry for dining, hanging out with friends or studying.

The renovations also include a refreshed space for Moe's Southwest Grill, and State Fountain Bakery, a cherished MSU tradition, will return to its original location with an expanded menu.

A new dining option will open in Azalea Hall in fall 2025, offering hand-tossed, brick oven pizza and Mediterranean-themed foods. It will also have

food lockers to streamline the pickup experience for students on-the-go.



ENHANCING CONVENIENCE AND ACCESSIBILITY

With Perry closed for the 2024-25 school year, MSU implemented daily food trucks on campus along with a Perry-to-Go location in the Union and a Perry Food Truck on the YMCA Plaza.

Students can use their Dawg Dollars, a revamped version of Flex Dollars, through the GrubHub app to quickly order and pick up meals from the food trucks.

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

By investing in new concepts and enhancing existing facilities, the university aims to create a more dynamic and inclusive dining landscape. The combination of traditional

favorites and innovative new offerings will elevate the dining experience for students, faculty and staff.

The improvements being made around dining show MSU's dedication to providing a vibrant, diverse dining experience. As the campus evolves, so too will its dining options, creating a more welcoming, flavorful environment for all.



BY BRAXTON STONE

NPHC PLAZA

A new plaza is set to become a cornerstone for Mississippi State's National Pan-Hellenic Council chapters, marking a significant step forward in fostering community, pride and representation among historically Black Greek-letter organizations.

With a projected budget of \$1.6 million, the new plaza — which will be located by the new Azalea Hall at the intersection of George Perry and Barr Avenue — aims to enhance the visibility and impact of the NPHC on the MSU campus.

The National Pan-Hellenic Council, or NPHC, represents nine prestigious fraternities and sororities, collectively known as the "Divine Nine." Since its inception at MSU, the NPHC has produced more than 500 alumni.

Roderick Davis, assistant director in MSU's Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life and the university's NPHC advisor, said the plaza will "allow these chapters to have more representation of who they are and what they do for our campus."

The plaza will be a venue for events and tell the history and achievements of MSU's NPHC chapters. It will also promote collaboration by providing opportunities for forums and discussions that

encourage interaction and the exchange of ideas.

The NPHC Plaza promises to be more than just an architectural addition. It is poised to become a vital hub for community engagement, cultural celebration and leadership development, and a beacon of hope and unity for current students and alumni alike.

Gifts to the NPHC Plaza Project can be made at greeks.msstate.edu/giving-back.



NEW DIRECTOR



SHANICE WHITE

Director of Student
Counseling Services

Shanice White joined the Division of Student Affairs in January 2024 as Student Counseling Services director.

White oversees the center's daily operations and works with other campus partners to implement mental wellness programming.

She most recently led the Latasha Norman Center for Counseling Services at Jackson State University. There she provided individual, group, couples and family therapy; oversaw the Office on Violence Against Women campus grant;

and helped align student affairs programming with the university's mental health and well-being strategic plan.

White, who holds bachelor's and master's degrees from JSU and is working on a doctorate from the University of Southern Mississippi, is owner and lead therapist for Endless Possibilities Counseling and Consulting.

White has also been a therapist for Mississippi Children's Home Services and Hinds Behavioral Health Services.



KELSEY GUY

Director of Planning and
Assessment

Kelsey Guy joined the Division of Student Affairs this summer as the director of planning and assessment. Guy brings extensive experience in research, teaching and program development to her role guiding the division's efforts to promote student success through data-driven improvements.

Guy comes to MSU from the University of Alabama, or UA, where she served as a faculty-led program advisor for Education Abroad and taught Italian language and culture courses. As program advisor, she collaborated with

faculty to plan and manage study abroad programs while also supporting students and families throughout the process.

She holds a bachelor's degree from UA and a master's degree from Florida State University. Guy recently completed her doctorate in educational research with a specialization in qualitative methods from UA.

Her passion for research and education aligns perfectly with her new role enhancing the division's programs and services for students.

PROFILES



ANDREW RENDON

Executive Director of Veterans and Military Affairs

After leading Planning and Assessment for Mississippi State University's Division of Student Affairs for nearly a decade, Andrew Rendon began a new role this spring as MSU's executive director of Veterans and Military Affairs.

Rendon will lead the development and enhancement of university services for military-connected students, including the G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery Center for America's Veterans and MSU's Army and Air Force ROTC programs.

Before returning to MSU from an active-duty military stint, Rendon served as assistant

dean and inaugural director of the Center for America's Veterans and an Army ROTC assistant professor of military science.

This spring, Rendon completed a doctorate in public policy and administration from MSU and earned promotion to brigadier general in the Mississippi National Guard.

During a nearly 30-year military career, Rendon has earned the Bronze Star Medal, six Meritorious Service Medals, the Senior Army Aviator Badge, the U.S. Army Parachutist Badge and numerous other federal and state awards.

Andrew Rendon pets MSU's Bully mascot, Dak, while celebrating his promotion to brigadier general. From left to right: MSU President Mark E. Keenum, Adjutant General of Mississippi Maj. Gen. Janson D. Boyles, Rendon, his wife Hillary Rendon, and children Sarah and Kyler Rendon. (Photo by Grace Cockrell)



PURYEAR AWARDS

BY GRAYCEN VAIL

Jim and Joan Copeland Puryear have left an indelible mark on Mississippi State University and the world of higher education. Each year, MSU honors their commitment to student success and leadership through two prestigious awards: the Dr. James B. and Dr. Joan Copeland Puryear Outstanding Endowed Student Organization President of the Year Award and the Outstanding Student Volunteer of the Year Award.

Jim, a Jackson native, served as vice president for student affairs at the Medical College of Georgia, where he worked until his retirement in 2000.

Joan, a Starkville native, was an English professor and dean of general studies at Augusta Technical College. Her involvement in numerous academic organizations demonstrated a lifelong dedication to education and student success.

Both were deeply involved in student organizations at MSU. Their experiences shaped their understanding of the importance of student leadership and service, and they have worked to recognize students who excel in these areas.

The awards established in their honor reflect their passion for student involvement

and leadership. The annual recipients receive recognition on MSU's student leader wall of honor in the YMCA Building and a cash prize supported by the Puryears' endowment — which was created to ease financial burdens for students, allowing them to focus on their education while being recognized for their contributions to the university community.

Micah Bertucci's dedication to the Brickfire Mentoring Program — which supports underserved families in Starkville by pairing MSU undergraduates with local students in kindergarten through eight grade — earned her the 2024 Puryear Outstanding Student Organization President of the Year.

Cameron Mayers' tremendous record of service and involvement earned him the 2024 Puryear Outstanding Student Volunteer of the Year.

Among the numerous organizations he contributed to at MSU, Mayers served as deputy chief of staff for the Student Association, vice-chair of the Mississippi Federation of College Republicans, an executive member of Men of Excellence, a College of Arts and Sciences Ambassador and an Honors Minority Ambassador.



Micah Bertucci (center) receives the 2024 Puryear Outstanding Student Organization President of the Year from 2023 Miss MSU Morgan Nelson (left) and Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs Jackie Mullen.



Cameron Mayers (center) receives the 2024 Puryear Outstanding Student Volunteer of the Year from Nelson (left) and Vice President for Student Affairs Regina Young Hyatt.

LETTER FROM
**DR. REGINA
YOUNG HYATT**
**VICE PRESIDENT FOR
STUDENT AFFAIRS**



Dear Bulldogs and Friends,
WOW! 2023-24 was an awesome academic year filled with great new students, new programs and events, and new team members in our Division of Student Affairs.

This edition of Maroon Traditions gives you a glimpse into some of the excitement on campus this past year. From the transition of our ROTC programs to our division to the installation of our Bully's Pantry vending machine, we remain centrally focused on student success and well-being.

One of our major areas of focus in 2023-24 was related to student belonging and how we could better assist students in getting connected to campus life, services and programs. Our "Find Your People" campaign spanned across the division and the university, and we are hopeful those efforts will yield positive results for our students.

We were excited to kick off the construction of Azalea Hall, our

newest residence hall project and begin work on the major renovation of historic Perry Cafeteria. More to come on those projects in the 2024-25 edition of Maroon Traditions.

The Mississippi State University community — our students, our employees and our alumni — continually work together to make MSU the place where Students Matter and where we are helping our students achieve their goals and dreams. I am proud to be part of this family and can't wait to share with you the successes of our next academic year with you.

A special note of thanks to our MarComm team for their creativity and energy in bringing the stories of our Division and our students to life through the Maroon Traditions magazine. And as always ...

*Hail State!
Regina*

2023 2024 DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS



CENTER FOR AMERICA'S VETERANS

The Center for America's Veterans unveiled the long-awaited World War II Memorial on the back patio of Nusz Hall.

MSU once again earned recognition as a Top Veteran-Friendly School by U.S. Veterans Magazine.

Collaboration with the Mississippi National Guard broadened and enhanced the Mississippi National Guard General Scholarship program, allowing a Mississippi National Guard member to fund the cost of their tuition significantly.

OFFICE OF SURVIVOR SUPPORT

The Office of Survivor Support delivered 1,963 programming and awareness initiatives and 336 targeted trainings about survivor services and resources, directly reaching 2,299 students, faculty and staff.

The office conducted 311 appointments and provided 314 hours of direct service to survivors.

Through a partnership with Student Counseling Services, a part-time embedded clinician in the office resulted in a 50% increase in survivors simultaneously engaging in advocacy and therapy.



DEAN OF STUDENTS' OFFICE

Three Dean of Students' team members participated in The Summit Conference at the University of Tennessee Knoxville, analyzing conduct trends with SEC partners and the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life.

The Student Honor Code office continued to collaborate with upper administration, the data science department and the Center for Teaching and Learning to navigate the rapid evolution of artificial intelligence.

ARMY ROTC

MSU's Army ROTC provided \$1.2 million in ROTC scholarships and stipends and \$275,000 in State Education Assistance Program funds to cadets in the Simultaneous Membership Program.

Nineteen cadets received selection for leadership opportunities, including attendance at the United States Army Sapper School, Air Assault, Airborne and Basic Mountain Warfare School.

COLVARD STUDENT UNION

The Colvard Student Union welcomed nearly 2 million guests through its doors during the 2023-24 academic year.

Event Services hosted more than 5,000 events between the Colvard Student Union and Lee Hall's Bettersworth Auditorium in 2023-24.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

During the 2023-24 academic year, MSU Emergency Management hosted 35 training sessions for the MSU campus community and had 475 participants.

The team expanded to welcome a new assistant director.



STUDENT COUNSELING SERVICES

Student Counseling Services provided services to 875 students in the 2023-24 academic year.

Six staff members earned the Board-Certified Telemental Health Provider credential.

Student Counseling Services collaborated with the Division of Access, Opportunity and Success and provided an embedded counselor in MSU's College of Architecture, Art and Design.

CENTER FOR STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND FRATERNITY & SORORITY LIFE

The Center for Student Activities registered 34 new student organizations in 2023-24. More than 300 student organizations hosted over 5,500 events.

A record of more than 2,000 students attended New Maroon Camp in 2023.

MSU's fraternities and sororities raised more than \$600,000 in philanthropy dollars and performed more than 65,000 service hours during the 2023-24 academic year.



AIR FORCE ROTC

Air Force ROTC Detachment 425 commissioned 11 officers into the United States Air Force in the 2023-24 academic year.

Seventy-eight percent of Detachment 425's second-year cadets were selected to continue into MSU's Professional Officer Course as juniors and seniors, on par with the national average.

Nineteen cadets earned slots in various programs.

OFFICE FOR STUDENT WELL-BEING

The Office for Student Well-Being provided nutritional counseling to 175 students in 2023-24.

The office participated in 18 community and campus programs that reached over 2,200. It conducted mental health presentations and programs that reached more than 6,000 MSU faculty, students and staff.

DINING SERVICES

Dining Services provided MSU's College of Veterinary Medicine with vegetable scraps for ongoing rabbit research and partnered with Students for a Sustainable Campus and Campus Landscaping to provide coffee grounds for on-campus landscaping.

It hosted a blood drive in collaboration with Vitalant, secured a \$1,800 grant for Starkville Strong to assist with Holiday Joy Packs and donated a meal to the J.L. King Center's Juneteenth Arts Celebration for the students and staff. MSU ranked No. 37 overall, first in Mississippi, in College Dining by Niche.



HOUSING & RESIDENCE LIFE

Construction began on Azalea Hall, which will open in fall 2025.

Housing and Residence Life installed NARCAN, a life-saving medication that can reverse an overdose from opioids, in its offices and all campus residence halls in October 2023.

The department completed Hathorn Hall upgrades in summer 2024, implemented a new process for upper-division students interested in living on campus and made offerings related to renter's insurance available to students living on campus.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Student Leadership and Community Engagement staff members completed more than 50 contact hours throughout the university and local community through in-person workshops and facilitation opportunities.

Students reported 17,674 service hours through the Maroon Volunteer Center.

BARNES & NOBLE AT MSU

The MSU Bookstore donated more than \$23,000 to various on-campus and community organizations.

The Bulldog Bundle program saved students \$5.8 million in the 2023-24 academic year and partnered with campus to set record-high adoptions each semester, positively impacting student success and preparedness.

UNIVERSITY RECREATION

A renovation to the Joe Frank Sanderson Center improved the MSU student experience by providing more space for strength and cardio training and adding a bouldering cave to increase climbing opportunities.

University Recreation certified four new group exercise instructors, seven cycling instructors and more than 20 personal trainers.

The department hosted tournaments and camps, exposing thousands of prospective students to MSU and the recreation facilities.





DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

The Disability Resource Center administered 8,016 accommodated exams, a record total for the third-straight year.

ACCESS expanded staffing to prepare for serving an increased number of students in the future.

The Administration for Community Living's Community-Funded Projects, which supports adults with intellectual disabilities, awarded ACCESS \$882,000 for fiscal year 2024.

LONGEST STUDENT HEALTH CENTER

For the 2023-24 academic year, the Longest Student Health Center recorded 20,909 kept patient appointments, 13,225 student appointments, 7,584 private patient appointments and 1,067 kept patient appointments with a mental health nurse practitioner.

A total of 8,444 unique individuals received services from the center.



PARENT & FAMILY SERVICES

The Office of Parent and Family Services welcomed more than 900 guests from 25 states to its Bulldog Family Weekend.

The Office of Off-Campus Student Services hosted 16 participation opportunities for off-campus partners: one fall housing fair, one spring housing fair, one spring finals week housing fair and multiple in-person tabling opportunities.

UNIVERSITY POLICE

Mississippi State's Police Department signed the 30x30 Pledge to advance women in policing to 30% by 2030, a goal the department has already exceeded.

MSU's Campus Card office joined the Integrated Security Management Division team.

A total of 2,037 cameras and 1,390 doors were installed on the Genetec Security Center platform.

BULLY'S PANTRY & FOOD SECURITY NETWORK

Bully's Pantry recorded 3,474 visits in 2023-24, servicing almost 566 students. The Block-by-Block meal program satisfied 856 meal requests (4,280 meals). Students donated 544 meals.



COMPUTER-BASED TESTING SERVICES

Computer-Based Testing Services administered 2,058 professional and certification exams for university and community candidates in 2023-24, a 10% increase from the previous year.

A NOTE FROM OUR EDITOR

BROCK TURNIPSEED

Director, Marketing & Communication
Division of Student Affairs



We are fortunate to have a beautiful campus that is continuing to evolve to support the growing needs of our students. We are excited to have multiple projects taking place at MSU, including a new residence hall, new dining options and innovative programs that will bolster future growth and learning opportunities for our students.

This edition of Maroon Traditions celebrates our university's growth and the accomplishments of our students and staff. It also honors those we have lost and recognizes those who support our students on campus and beyond.

Students are the heart of our work in the Division of Student Affairs, and what makes Maroon Traditions special is that it would not be possible without the students from our Marketing and Communication team and those from our numerous colleges and majors who provided the writing and design.

We want Maroon Traditions to showcase how we are continuing to honor MSU's rich legacy while also building new pathways that will create transformative experiences for all Bulldogs.



MAROON TRADITIONS





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